

Deadline Friday, 25 June 2021

RISE Annual Conference 2021

Wednesday, 22 September to Friday, 24 September 2021

Blavatnik School of Government at the University of Oxford, international hubs (TBC), and virtually

We invite you to submit a paper for, or express your interest in attending (virtually or in-person), the [Research on Improving Systems of Education \(RISE\) Programme](#) Annual Conference (see the [2019 Annual Conference event page](#)).

The RISE Programme applies systems thinking to education. We seek to understand why learning outcomes in a particular school, district, or country are poor, and why the (system) conditions causing these low learning levels exist. This understanding can then inform attempts to realign the relationships in the education system to be coherent for learning, meaning that every component works together with the goal of improving learning for all.

The 2021 RISE Conference will cover a range of themes under the broad umbrella of education systems thinking. It will draw on research undertaken in RISE countries—Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Tanzania, and Vietnam. In addition, we are issuing an open call for papers from researchers working on these and any other developing countries.

Submissions are invited in any area of research relating to education systems, including [all themes at past RISE conferences](#). Papers touching on the following topics are particularly welcome:

- **Accountability versus autonomy**—What are the merits and demerits of top-down, high-stakes accountability schemes in the education sector, and how do these schemes compare to initiatives that grant agents greater autonomy?
- **Management**—Can management reforms, at any level of the system, realign relationships to be more coherent for learning?
- **Distributed authority**—Can education systems successfully distribute authority (e.g. standard setting by the centre, accounts of performance by the district or school)? What are the constraints, political or administrative, that undermine such attempts?
- **Instructional (in)coherence**—In what ways and why is classroom instruction so often incoherent for learning? What additional challenges have been raised by the COVID-19 pandemic?

RISE is keen to solicit academic papers presenting original research on these topics from across the social science disciplines/methodologies. We also welcome submissions based on evidence-constituting experiential reflections that will directly inform the discussion of these topics.

RISE Conference 2021 Call for Papers

Full papers should be submitted by **Friday, 25 June 2021** to rise@bsg.ox.ac.uk. Abstracts will be considered for inclusion. Authors of accepted papers will be notified no later than 23 July 2021.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and uncertainty surrounding travel restrictions, we are looking into the possibility of hosting a hybrid conference combining virtual participation and regional event hubs that will allow for in-person attendance. The conference will be live-streamed via our main event hub at the Blavatnik School of Government at the University of Oxford in the United Kingdom. We hope to identify other regional hubs where our colleagues can gather to participate in the conference. Virtual participants will be able to join via the Zoom platform. Presenters of the selected papers have the option to participate in the conference either in-person (should circumstances allow) or virtually. Further details will be released in July/August 2021.

If you are interested in attending the conference either in person or virtually, please visit the RISE website and [fill in the online form](#).

Email correspondence regarding paper submission or participation in the conference can be directed to the RISE communications team (rise@bsg.ox.ac.uk).

RISE Conference Themes 2016-2019 (Call for Papers)

- **Information and Assessment** (e.g., What changes occur when key actors in the system—civil servants, principals, teachers, parents—are given better information about learning outcomes? What is measured, how well, and how is this information used?)
- **Financing and Resources** (e.g., Do schools lack access to credit and/or support services? What changes occur when any such constraints are relaxed? How are schools funded by government, parents, and communities?)
- **Teachers** (e.g., How can the education system support individuals to become effective teachers and ensure that the best teachers remain in the schools that need them? How are teachers recruited, and how are they trained and supported?)
- **Curriculum** (e.g., Is teaching taking place at the right level? What is being taught in classrooms? Which curricula and teaching methods are proving in/effective?)
- **Governance** (e.g., How do system features such as the degree of school autonomy and stakeholder engagement affect teacher behaviour, and learning outcomes?)
- **The Political Economy of Reform** (e.g., What are the key political obstacles to adopting learning-oriented education reforms, and how have some systems overcome them? What problems of implementation arise during piloting and at scale, and how can these challenges be tackled?)
- **Demand for Education** (e.g., What are stakeholders demanding from education systems? Can stakeholders provide demand-side accountability that drives up education quality?)
- **Alternative Modalities of Provision** (e.g., What role, if any, should non-state actors play in school finance and/or management? Can private schools, or public-private partnerships, be an effective alternative to conventional state schools, and if so, how should they be designed, governed, or regulated?)
- **Learning Inequalities and Social Mobility** (e.g., How should we measure learning to draw meaningful comparisons across groups and countries, and over time? Where do learning inequalities exist, and why? How, and to what extent, can more equitable learning contribute to better life outcomes?)
- **Innovation** (e.g., Are education systems generating, evaluating, and scaling system-wide innovations in learning, and if not, why not?)